

# Deferring the Service Obligations of NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program Participants for Approved Undergraduate, Graduate, and Medical Training

## DEFERMENT INFORMATION

For each year of scholarship support, you will incur two service obligations to the NIH: (1) a 10-week summer service as a paid employee in an NIH research lab and (2) after graduation, 1 year of full-time paid employment in an NIH research lab.

Your post-graduating service obligation, however, may be deferred until after you complete graduate or medical programs leading to a doctoral degree.

### Definitions

A **deferment** is a delay in the start of an NIH UGSP service obligation granted by the UGSP Director. Requests for deferment must be made by the scholar. Deferments may be granted for the academic year and continued for a specified period of time in order for the scholar to enter and complete an approved graduate or medical training program, in accordance with the program's Federal statute and regulations, and the administrative guidelines set forth in this application packet.

An **undergraduate degree program** is an academic program that culminates in a baccalaureate degree (B.A., B.S., or equivalent).

**Graduate or medical training** is an academic program that culminates in a doctoral degree (such as Ph.D. or M.D.).

**Postgraduate training** is postgraduate clinical training accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

**Completion of residency** is the minimum time period of approved postgraduate clinical training required for a physician to sit for a specialty board's certifying examination(s).

The UGSP Director may grant a **delay in the start of the service obligation**, in intervals of up to 1 year, for reasons other than for approved graduate or medical training. Requests for postponement must be submitted in writing to the UGSP with the required documentation. For more information, see page 16.

### General Rules for Deferments

Deferments will not be considered for training conducted by any entity that imposes a service obligation, such as a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States. In addition, deferments will not be considered for graduate training programs which culminate in a master's-level degree: only doctoral-level training (such as Ph.D. and M.D. programs) is eligible for deferment of the UGSP service obligation.

## The Terms and Conditions of Deferment

### You must:

1. Receive approval of your request for deferment by the UGSP Director.
2. Pursue only the graduate or medical training officially approved for your deferment by the UGSP Director.
3. Submit documentation to the UGSP of your training status in the approved program prior to each year of training. (Submission of an annual Deferment Request Form satisfies this requirement.)
4. Make no changes in your period or type of training without prior written approval from the UGSP Director.
5. Notify the UGSP Director in writing within 30 days of any change of address, intent to terminate training, or similar change.
6. Commence service payback within 60 days of the end of the deferment.

## Ending Training to Begin Service

If you decide at any time during your deferment that you want to discontinue your training and begin payback of your service obligation, you should promptly contact the UGSP for guidance. You are cautioned that once you start your NIH UGSP service obligation, you must complete 52 weeks of your obligation before resuming additional training (unless the UGSP grants an exception due to extraordinary circumstances; see below for details).

## Postponement of the Service Obligation

### Postponement During Undergraduate Attendance

Scholars who do not receive a renewal of their scholarship and remain as full-time students in an approved program of study must submit annual verification of their continued enrollment in an undergraduate degree program.

## Medical and Personal Postponements

Postponements may be granted by the UGSP Director in intervals of up to 1 year. The UGSP Director determines if compliance with the obligation is temporarily impossible based on information from you and independent documentation from health professionals treating you that you suffer from a physical or mental disability resulting in your temporary inability to comply with your scholarship service obligation. A postponement may also be granted if you can document any problems of a personal nature such as a physical or mental disability, or terminal illness in your immediate family, which the UGSP Director determines would temporarily render you unable to perform the service obligation you have incurred. "Family member" includes the following relatives of scholars:

- (a) spouse and spouse's parents;
- (b) children, including adopted children, and their spouses;
- (c) parents;
- (d) brothers and sisters, and their spouses;
- (e) any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the scholar is the equivalent of a family relationship.

In addition, once a scholar has begun a 52-week period of service, they are expected to complete it without interruption. An exception may be granted in extraordinary circumstances (such as an unavoidable conflict with an approved graduate or medical training program's start date, which was unknown to the scholar at the beginning of service payback period).

Requests for postponements must be submitted in writing to the UGSP Director.

## **Failure to Meet the Terms and Conditions of Deferment**

You are responsible for having your school submit a signed deferment form verifying enrollment in an approved undergraduate, graduate, or medical training program to the UGSP no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year. If you fail to submit the form, or fail to comply with the terms and conditions of your deferment, you are subject to the default provisions of the UGSP described in the *Fine Print* section on page 20 and in the contract.